



QQI

Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann

Component Specification

Crop Production Science

NFQ Level 5

5N1730

1. Component Details

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|---------------------------|--|
| Title | Crop Production Science |
| Teideal as Gaeilge | Eolaíocht Táirgeadh Barraí |
| Award Class | Minor |
| Code | 5N1730 |
| Level | 5 |
| Credit Value | 10 |
| Purpose | The purpose of this award is to equip the learner with the knowledge, skill and competence to apply scientific principles to the production and management of crops. |
| Learning Outcomes | Learners will be able to: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1 Explain the living processes of plants and their relationship with environmental factors in a crop production context2 Discuss the characteristics of micro-organisms and their role in crop and animal production3 Explain the relevance of physical and chemical composition of soils for modern farming practices4 Outline the consequences of farming activities on the environment with respect to wildlife and biodiversity, |

- water quality, current European Union (EU) directives and environment protection schemes
- 5 Appraise factors affecting grass production including the growth habits of grass and clover plants, grass seed mixture selection, role of clover, manipulation of grass growth, grass utilisation, and grass conservation
 - 6 Identify plant parts in a crop production context including name and function of; roots, stems, leaves and flowers
 - 7 Use plant identification techniques and grass measurement techniques for high value plants, common weeds, and grass growth performance in a commercial pasture sward
 - 8 Determine farm winter forage provisions including quantities required and quantities in storage, dry matter, pH and dry matter digestibility, and suitability of forages in storage
 - 9 Interpret a soil analysis report in respect of lime, nitrogen, phosphorous and potassium requirements
 - 10 Use soil analysis results as the basis for soil fertility for crop production by using organic manures, and chemical fertilisers for maintaining and correcting soil nutrient deficiencies.

Assessment

General Information

Details of FET assessment requirements are set out in [Assessment Guidelines for Providers](#).

All FET assessment is criterion referenced. Successful achievement of the award is based on learners attaining the required standards of knowledge, skill or competence.

The techniques set out below are considered the optimum approach to assessment for this component. In exceptional circumstances providers may identify alternative assessment techniques through the provider's application for programme validation which are **reliable** and **valid** but which are more appropriate to their context.

Assessment of a number of components may be integrated across programmes for delivery, provided that the learning outcomes of each minor award are assessed.

Group or team work may form part of the assessment, provided each learner's achievement is separately assessed.

All providers are required to submit an assessment plan as part of their application for programme validation. Assessment Plans will include information relating to scheduling and integration of assessment. See current FET validation guidelines at www.qgi.ie.

Assessment Techniques

In order to demonstrate that they have reached the standards of knowledge, skill and competence identified in all the learning outcomes, learners are required to complete the assessment(s) below.

The assessor is responsible for devising assessment instruments (e.g. project and assignment briefs, examination papers), assessment criteria and mark sheets, consistent with the techniques identified below and FETAC's assessment requirements.

Programme validation will require providers to map each learning outcome to its associated assessment technique. See current FET validation guidelines at www.qgi.ie.

All learning outcomes **must** be assessed and achieved

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|-------------------------|-----|
| Assignment | 20% |
| Examination - Theory | 40% |
| Examination - Practical | 40% |

Description

Assignment

An assignment is an exercise carried out in response to a brief with specific guidelines as to what should be included. An assignment is usually of short duration and may be carried out over a specified period of time.

The assessor will devise an assignment to assess learning outcome 10.

Examination - Theory

An examination provides a means of assessing a learner's ability to recall and apply knowledge, skills and understanding within a set period of time and under clearly specified conditions.

A theory-based examination assesses the ability to recall, apply and understand specific theory and knowledge.

The assessor will devise a theory based examination to assess learning outcomes 1 - 5.

Examination - Practical

An examination provides a means of assessing a learner's ability to recall and apply knowledge, skills and understanding within a set period of time and under clearly specified conditions.

A practical examination assesses specified practical skills demonstrated in a set period of time under restricted conditions.

The assessor will devise a practical examination based on 10 practical tasks to assess learning outcomes 6 - 10.

List of Tasks

1. Identifying grasses with the aid of a key
2. Identifying weeds in grassland
3. Calculating the quantity of winter forage required
4. Calculating the quantity of hay or silage in storage
5. Estimating dry matter, dry matter digestibility and pH of silage in storage
6. Assessing the presence of spoilage
7. Interpreting lab results on hay or silage
8. Interpreting soil analysis report
9. Identifying root, stem, leaf and flower parts
10. Taking a soil sample and preparing for submission to laboratory

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Learners may be assessed on the basis of their prior knowledge and experience. Providers must be specifically quality assured to assess learners by this means. To do so they must complete B10, see Provider's Quality Assurance Guidelines and be included on the Register of RPL approved providers. See RPL

Guidelines at www.fetac.ie for further information and registration details.

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|---|---|------|-----------|-------|-----------|-------------|------------|
| Grading | <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>50% - 64%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Merit</td> <td>65% - 79%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Distinction</td> <td>80% - 100%</td> </tr> </table> | Pass | 50% - 64% | Merit | 65% - 79% | Distinction | 80% - 100% |
| Pass | 50% - 64% | | | | | | |
| Merit | 65% - 79% | | | | | | |
| Distinction | 80% - 100% | | | | | | |
| Specific Validation Requirements | <p>The provider must have the following in place to offer this award:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Access to farms that have grazing, tillage crops and forage crops in storage | | | | | | |
| Supporting Documentation | None | | | | | | |
| Access | To access programmes leading to this award the learner should have reached the standards of knowledge, skill and competence associated with the preceding level of the National Framework of Qualifications. This may have been achieved through a formal qualification or through relevant life and work experience. | | | | | | |
| Transfer | Successful completion of this component award enables the learner to transfer to programmes leading to other certificates where this component is a mandatory or an elective requirement. | | | | | | |

2. FET Award Standards

QQI award standards are determined within the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ), <http://www.nfq-qqi.com>. QQI determines standards for the education and training awards that it makes itself and that are made by providers to whom it has delegated authority to make an award. Providers offering programmes leading to QQI awards **must** have their programme(s) validated in accordance with current validation policy (see www.qqi.ie).

Award standards are designed to be consistent with the NFQ's award classes i.e. major, special purpose, supplemental and minor awards. They are expressed in terms of **learning outcomes** i.e. concise statements of what the learner is expected to know or be able to do in order to achieve a particular award. Learning outcomes for FET awards are contained within the associated specifications:

| AWARD CLASS | STANDARDS | AWARDS |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|---|
| Major Award | Certificate Specification | Certificate (Levels 1 to 5) Advanced Certificate (Level 6) |
| Supplemental Award | Supplemental Specification | Supplemental Certificate (Level 3 to 6) |
| Special Purpose | Specific Purpose Specification | Specific Purpose Certificate (Levels 3 to 6) |

Award standards are thresholds, they describe standards of knowledge, skill or competence to be acquired, and where appropriate, demonstrated, by a learner before an award may be made.

Award standards will be reviewed from time to time as necessary. Minor changes may be made by the QQI executive outside the review cycle where necessary. Changes to standards are published on QQI's website. Providers with validated programmes and providers with delegated authority to make awards are responsible for monitoring relevant standards and making necessary responses to changes.

3. FET Credit

Every FET certificate and component specification includes an FET credit value (Table 1). FET credit is quantified in multiples of 5 FET credits (up to 50 hours of learner effort). Learner effort is based on the time taken by typical learners at the level of the award to achieve the learning outcomes for the award. It includes all learning time involved including: guided learning hours, self-directed learning and assessment.

Table 1: FET Credit Values

| NFQ Level | Major Awards Credit Values | Default Credit Values Minor Awards | Other Permitted Minor Award Credit Values | Special Purpose and Supplemental Award Credit Value Ranges |
|-----------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|---|--|
| 1 | 20 | 5 | 10 | |
| 2 | 30 | 5 | 10 | |
| 3 | 60 | 10 | 5,20 | >5 and <60 |
| 4 | 90 | 10 | 5,15,20 | >5 and <90 |
| 5 | 120 | 15 | 5,10,30 | >5 and <120 |
| 6 | 120 | 15 | 5,10,30 | >5 and <120 |

Guide to Level

Learning outcomes at this level include a broad range of skills that require some theoretical understanding. The outcomes may relate to engaging in a specific activity, with the capacity to use the instruments and techniques relating to an occupation. They are associated with work being undertaken independently, subject to general direction.

| Strand | Sub-strand | Nature of learning |
|------------------|-------------|--|
| Knowledge | Breadth | Broad range of knowledge |
| | Kind | Some theoretical concepts and abstract thinking, with significant depth in some areas. |
| Know How & Skill | Range | Demonstrate a broad range of specialised skills and tools |
| | Selectivity | Evaluate and use information to plan and develop investigative strategies and to determine solutions to varied unfamiliar problems |

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| Competence | Context | Act in a range of varied and specific contexts, taking responsibility for the nature and quality of outputs; identify and apply skill and knowledge to a wide variety of contexts |
| | Role | Exercise some initiative and independence in carrying out defined activities; join and function within multiple, complex and heterogeneous groups |
| | Learning to Learn | Learn to take responsibility for own learning within a managed environment |
| | Insight | Assume full responsibility for consistency of self- understanding and behaviour |

Extract from 'Determinations for the Outline National Framework of Qualifications': NQAI